

REMARKS

This Amendment and the following remarks are intended to fully respond to the Office Action dated December 6, 2006. In that Office Action claims 1-25 were examined, and all claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Additionally, claims 1, 2, 12, 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over certain Microsoft Excel® 2000 screenshots that were captured by the Examiner.

In this Response, claims 1-25 remain pending in the application.

Summary of Examiner Interview

The undersigned thanks Examiner Huynh for the courtesy of a telephone conference on February 5, 2007, where issues relating to the Section 112 rejections and the Section 103(a) rejections of independent claims 1 and 15 (based on Microsoft Excel® 2000 screenshots captured by the Examiner) were discussed. Applicant provided faxed copies of the screenshots contained in the below Appendix and explained the differences between the different screenshots. The above amendments to independent claims 1 and 15 represent the scope of the claim amendments discussed during the interview. Similarly, the below remarks regarding the screenshots captured by the Examiner, as well as those included in the Appendix, were also discussed during the interview. The Examiner indicated that she would consider the arguments and screenshots in more detail.

Section 112 Rejections

The Office action noted an inconsistency between claim 1 and the specification (page 3, lines 20-23) regarding the recited “first” and “second” portions of the table. This inconsistency has been addressed in the above amendment to the specification. Applicant thanks the Examiner for her close review of the application, and the undersigned has conducted a review of the entire application to ensure that no additional instances of this error occur within the specification.

The Office action further noted an inconsistency in the claim terminology relating to a “first unaltered portion” of a table, where that first portion is later altered. Independent claims 1 and 15 (and dependent claims 4, 6, 7, 10, 18, 20, 21 and 24) have been amended to recite “an

initially unaltered first portion” as opposed to “a first unaltered portion.” These amendments are believed to resolve any potential confusion regarding the “first portion” of the subsequent table (i.e., the portion that is initially unaltered following the insertion or deletion of a record from the dynamic table, but that is later shifted in order to align the first and second portions of the subsequent table).

Regarding the final § 112 rejection pertaining to claim 3, it appears that there is some confusion in that the Office action incorrectly states that “the second portion of the subsequent table is the portion of the subsequent table outside of the column range UCR of the dynamic table” (Office action at p. 3). This is incorrect since claim 2 recites that the column range of the subsequent table that overlaps the UCR column range of the dynamic table comprises the “second portion” of the subsequent table. Thus, as the Office action correctly notes in the following sentence, “the LCR/RCR is the portion of the subsequent table extending outside of the UCR column range.” That is, the LCR/RCR portion is the same as the initially unaltered “first portion” of the subsequent table, and it is this portion that is shifted to be aligned with the UCR or “second portion” of the subsequent table. Therefore, in light of the above explanation, reconsideration of the § 112 rejection of claim 3 is respectfully requested.

Section 103(a) Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 12, 15 and 16 were rejected as obvious in light of the Microsoft Excel® 2000 screenshots captured by the Examiner. These screenshots illustrate the insertion of an entire row within the sample spreadsheet (as clearly indicated by the dialog box on page 4 of the screenshots), and the resulting downward adjustment of the remaining data within the spreadsheet - including not only the second table but also the non-tabular data that was originally contained in cells H9 and I9. Thus, comparing pages 4 and 5 of the Examiner’s screenshots, the insertion of a single row within the spreadsheet moved the second table down one row (i.e., from rows 10-13 to rows 11-14) and also moved the non-tabular data (“Update 2/9/04”) down from row 9 to row 10.

Contrary to the assertions in the Office action, the step of inserting an entire spreadsheet row in this manner fails to disclose or suggest the final two elements of independent claim 1 (i.e., “determining” whether a second portion of a subsequent table has been split by the change

to the first table, and then “shifting” a first portion of the subsequent table to align the two portions of the table). Rather, the Excel® 2000 screenshots simply illustrate downward movement of the entire contents of the spreadsheet. No “determination” or “shifting” steps are disclosed or suggested by these screenshots. As a further explanation of the differences between the Excel® 2000 screenshots and the presently claimed invention, the below Appendix includes three pairs of Excel screenshots that more clearly illustrate the difference between inserting an entire spreadsheet row and inserting a record within a table.

Screenshot Nos. 1 and 2 below substantially duplicate the Examiner’s screenshots and provide a baseline for the following discussion. In particular, Screenshot No. 1 illustrates the selection of “Entire row” from the Excel dialog box when a user requests insertion of two rows at the position indicated by the highlighted box. When these two rows are inserted across the entire width of the spreadsheet, Screenshot No. 2 illustrates that the table to the right of the edited table (i.e., the credit card balance table) is broken by the insertion of the two rows. Additionally, as shown with the Examiner’s screenshots, the remaining data within the spreadsheet has been moved down two rows (including the non-tabular data in cells E8 and F8 which was not positioned below the first table).

Screenshot Nos. 3 and 4 illustrate that the insertion of a record within the first table (rather than an entire spreadsheet row) splits a lower table (see the dialog box in Screenshot No. 3). These screenshots are similar to FIGS. 5 and 6 of the patent drawings and further illustrate the problem described in the patent application. Thus, Screenshot Nos. 1-4 illustrate that the insertion of data within a first table can split adjacent tables, regardless of whether the adjacent tables are positioned below or beside the first table.

Screenshot Nos. 5 and 6 illustrate the present invention (utilizing Microsoft Office Web Components to open XML tables published to a Web page by Microsoft Excel®), whereby the insertion of two records within the first table operates to shift the **entire** lower table down by two rows **without** breaking the third table (i.e., the credit card table) or shifting the remaining non-tabular data in cells E8 and F8.

Taken together, Screenshot Nos. 1-6 in the below Appendix refute the allegation within the Office action that the Excel® 2000 screenshots disclose the “shifting” step and render obvious

the “determining” step of claim 1. Rather, it is apparent that the Excel[®] 2000 screenshots (which are similar to Screenshot Nos. 1 and 2 below) merely disclose the insertion of an entire row within the spreadsheet and the resultant downward movement of all the spreadsheet data. In particular, the Excel[®] 2000 screenshots do not suggest a step of “determining” that a subsequent table includes split first and second portions, nor do the screenshots illustrate “shifting” the first portion so that it is re-aligned with the second portion. Rather, the Excel[®] 2000 screenshots simply demonstrate moving the entire “subsequent table” downward (together with all the remaining spreadsheet data below the inserted rows).

While the Excel[®] 2000 screenshots do not show or suggest the presently claimed invention, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 15 to further clarify that the inserted (or deleted) “record” within the dynamic table “does not encompass an entire row of the array.” In this manner, the amended claims specifically distinguish the type of “entire row” insertion illustrated in the Excel[®] 2000 screenshots. This amendment is not considered to further limit the scope of the claims as the recited term “record” was defined within the patent specification to encompass only a row within a table (i.e., a row within a column range defined by the table), and not an entire row of a spreadsheet. For example, support for the claim amendments can be found in at least the following locations:

- page 3, lines 14-16 (first paragraph of the summary, reproduced above at page 2 of this Response) which notes that “rows are added or deleted from the modified table (i.e., when a row is added or deleted from only the column range of the modified table) ...”;

- page 8, lines 6-8 of the Detailed Description which notes that “the present invention relates to altering a table, such as by inserting or deleting rows from the table (where the insertion or deletion of rows is limited to the column range of the table)...”

- page 9, lines 15-17 of the Detailed Description which notes with reference to FIG. 1 that “the insertion is limited to those columns that comprise table 120 and thus any new data will only be inserted within new rows extending from column C to column F, as shown by the dashed box 122.”

- page 15, lines 15-18 of the Detailed Description which notes that “the present invention is illustrated in the context of an initial modification to table 120 where the table is expanded by the insertion of two rows at the bottom of the table (and limited to the column range of the table) as shown in FIG. 6.”

Thus, the amendments to independent claims 1 and 15 do not constitute new matter, and the amended claims further clarify that the present invention is neither shown nor suggested by the act of inserting entire rows within a spreadsheet. In light of the above amendments and Remarks, as well as the attached screenshots in the below Appendix, reconsideration of the § 103 rejections of independent claims 1 and 15 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All the pending claims 1-25 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested. Should any additional issues need to be resolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attempt to resolve those issues.


No fees are believed to be due for the submission of this Response; however, if this understanding is in error, please charge any such required fees, including any extension fees under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) necessary to maintain pendency of the present application, to Deposit Account No. 13-2725. Alternatively, please credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 13-2725.

Respectfully submitted,

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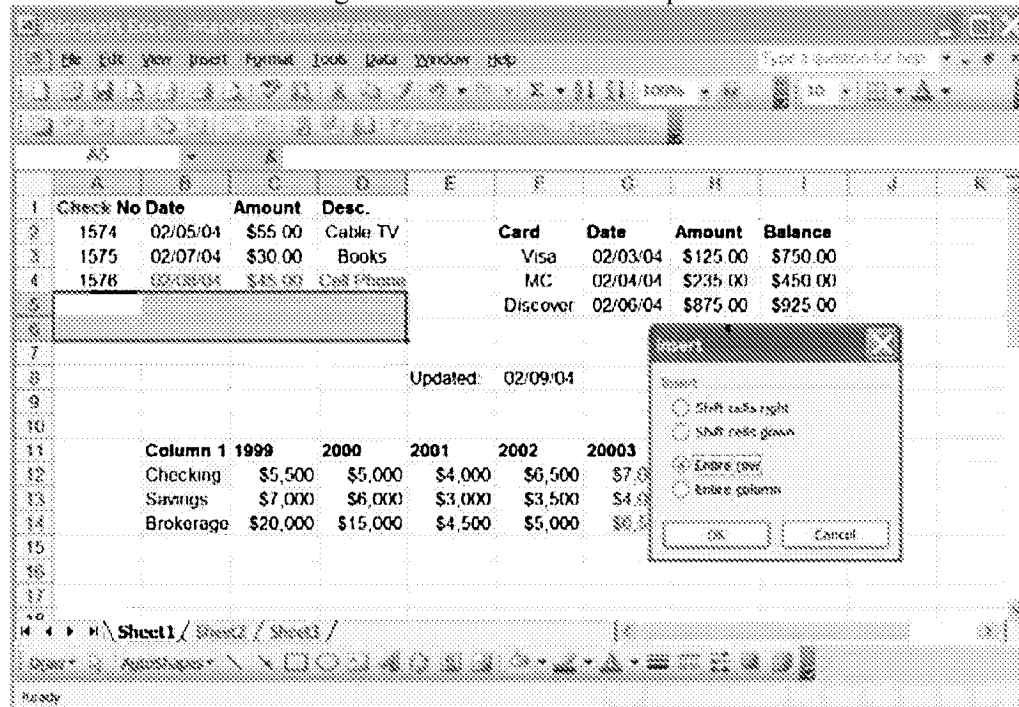
Date: March 6, 2007



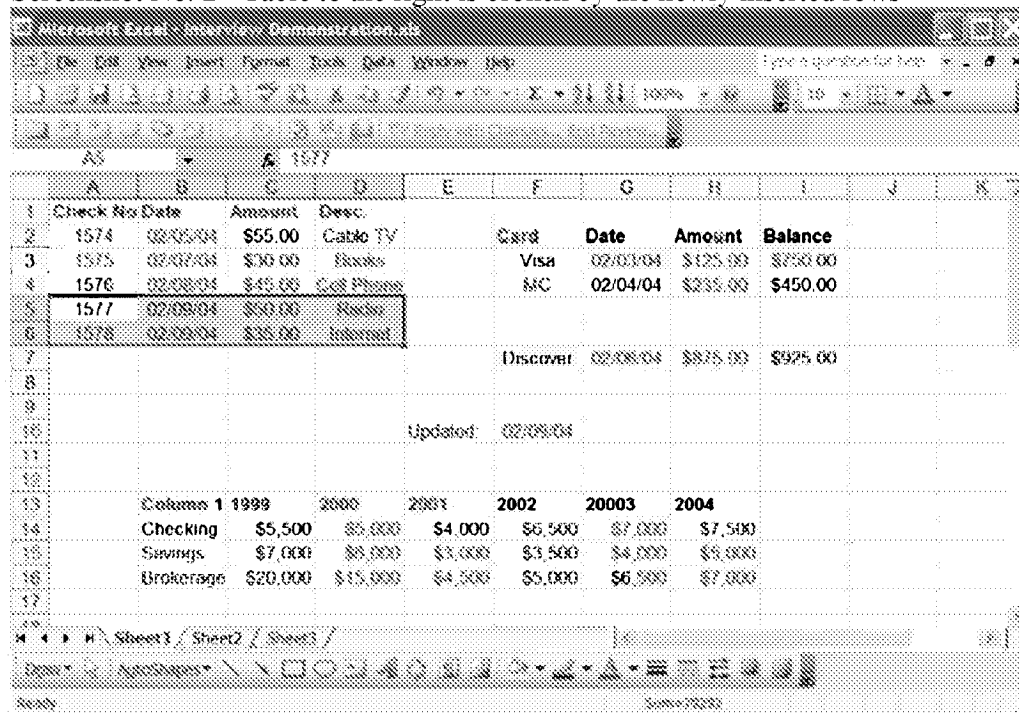

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APPENDIX

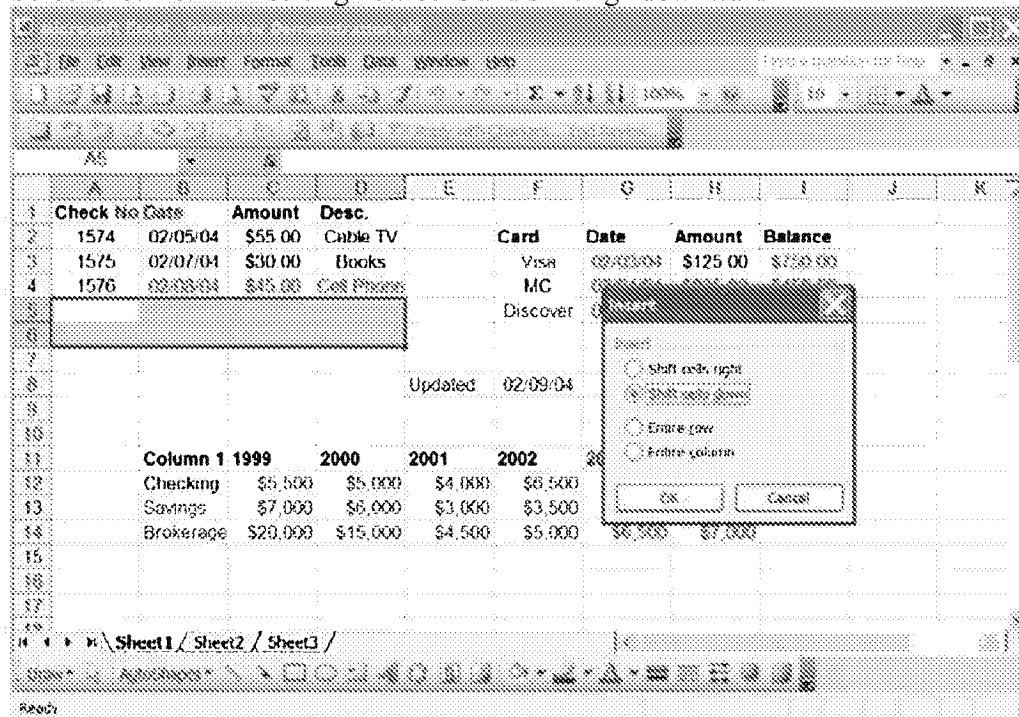
Screenshot No. 1 - Inserting "entire rows" within the spreadsheet to accommodate the new cells



Screenshot No. 2 - Table to the right is broken by the newly inserted rows



Screenshot No. 3 - Inserting new cells and shifting "downward"



Screenshot No. 4 - Table below is broken by the downward shift of the newly inserted cells

